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1809 1909

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Preface.

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Prayer Meeting: Thursdays, 7:30 P. M.

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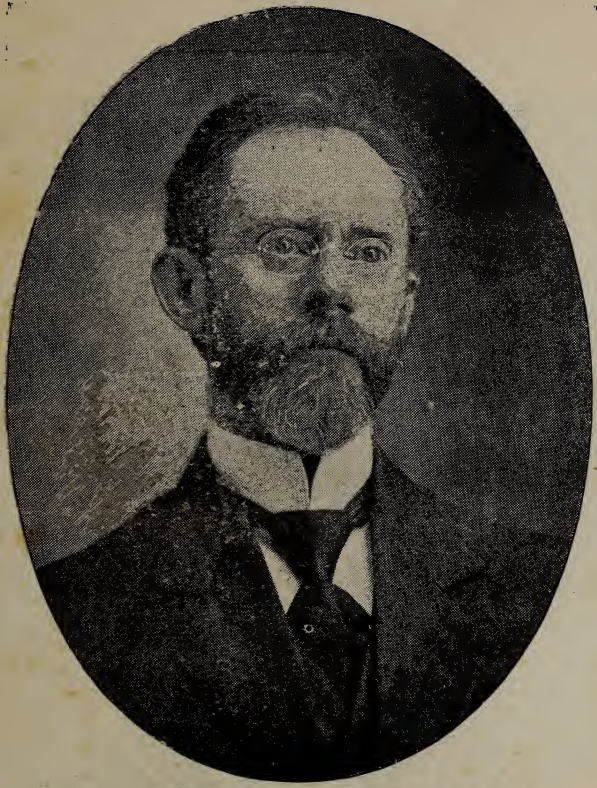

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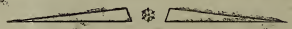

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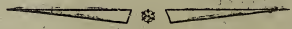

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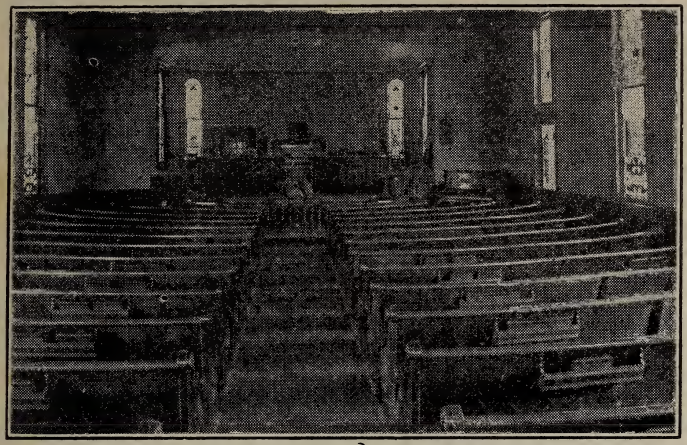

Inside View of Old First Church.

Old Parsonage, Built in 1830

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SERMON

Preached at Long Branch, by Rev. George Reed, on July 26th, 1874

Psalms, CXLV: 4.

What the Psalmist sang in the ancient time is what we propose to do this morning. There have been scenes of power and blessing in this old sanctuary, which well deserve to be recounted, and which call for praise to the God of our fathers.

In the ark of Israel was preserved a testimony of the wonderful doings of Jehovah among his people of old—so in the record of this Church, we would treasure up the story of its greatly favored past.

But there is a common saying that "no time is like the old time, no place like the old place, etc ", and there is danger of greatly exaggerating the glory of the "auld lang syne," and of depreciating the present. When the children of to-day are grown, they will think precisely the same of these times as we did of those. Because the earliest impressions are the deepest, and memory recalling the new strange days of long ago, will declare there is no place so dear as the old place, and no time like the old time. Perhaps, religiously, the earlier times were noisier than we find in many of the churches of the present; and yet are not

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the same God and the same blessings still with us? We hope they are. We fail to see the defects of the distant past, and only look upon its true grandeur. There is an enchantment in the distance. If you wish to comprehend all the design and beauty of a painting, you must be a little removed from it So we can never see the beauty and design of the times in which we live. They are too near us. Why, the Israelites, after they had journeyed for days toward their own liberty and their own land, even longed for Egypt again. The flesh-pots and servitude were more attractive in memory than Jehovah's promise and all his blessing. Thus we are wont to dwell upon the past as times of spiritual life and power such as will never again be known. They appear to have been such glorious times! And so they were. And we almost wish we had lived in the grand days of Luther, Bunyan or Wesley, as though there were no sin or trials then. Why it is the very darkness of those days which makes them shine so. The sun never seems to blaze so brightly upon us as after weeks of overhanging cloud. In the days of Wesley the preachers came to Conference on one occasion and asked; "what shall we do? a spirit of pride and worldliness is creeping in among us," etc. And on another occasion Mr. Wesley expelled from the London societies some 700 members in one year—(which could hardly be done in Long Branch if we desired). How many vainly wish themselves "a child again." But if they were, they would be as the boys and girls of to-day are—only wishing for sweet sixteen and twenty-one.

In briefly reviewing the history of this old Church, we almost desire the return of just such times and scenes; but we find that in every age there have been blemishes, and christians have had to watch and pray and strive as we do now. I present this thought, that none of us may wish we were dead, or that we had lived a hundred years ago.

Some years prior to 1809 the Methodist Society in this

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CENTENNIAL JUBILEE

SUNDAY, AUGUST 15, 1909

ORDER OF EXERCISES

9 A. M. OLD TIME LOVEFEAST.

Conducted by the Rev. B. C. Lippincott, D.D. and the Rev. Willis Reeves. (Admission by ticket).

10:30 A. M. CENTENNIAL SERMON.

By the Rev. John Krautz, D.D., of New York. Bishop Luther B. Wilson, D.D., L.L.D.. will also be present, if possible.

2:30 P. M. OLD FIRST, PAST AND PRESENT.

Addresses by former Pastors, Lippincott, Reeves, Corson, Manchester, Mitchell and Gifford.

7:45 P. M. CENTENNIAL SERMON.

By District-Superintendent Rev. John Handley. D.D.

Reunion and Harvest Home

Wednesday, August 18, 1909

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section worshiped in the old Church which is now used as a barn upon the premises of Mr. Kurrus, between this place and Oceanville. In that old barn, in the beginning of this century, resounded the voice of such men as Bishop Asbury and Benjamin Abbott, with holy eloquence.

In 1807 a Quarterly Meeting was held in the grove just west of where Mr. Antonides' carriage factory now stands—the preacher mounted a farm wagon for a pulpit—as the church could not accommodate the vast number which thronged to it on those occasions. It was about this time that great camp-meetings were held in Benjamin West's woods at Wolf Hill.

In the year 1808 there arose a discussion between Rev. Samuel Budd and Rev. Zenas Congor, which resulted in the division of the Society; that part which retained possession of the old Church, styling themselves "Independent Methodists." For some years they continued to worship there, under the leadership of Matthias Barkalow; but as one has remarked "little attention was paid to the children, and, receiving no young members, the society long since disbanded." The only surviving member, so far as I am aware, is the widow of Joseph Tallman.

In 1809, under the pastorate of Samuel Budd and John Woolson, with perfect harmony among the noble brethren who then composed the official board, the M. E. Society began the erection of this heaven honored place we now occupy.

Fancy a continuous woods of tall oak timber from Mr. Hoey's little paradise upon the shore, up through here into the interior. Just in the corner of the new cemetery, adjoining our grave-yard on the West, stood the school-house of Alexander McGregor. There was an old house where the Scriven monument now stands. There were also houses where Mr. Fulton, Jesse Stillwell, John Mount, Montillian Woolley, Jr., Montgomery Cook and Sarah Maps now reside.

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On this hill a place was cleared in the woods as the site of this church. Alexander McGregor, the A. T. Stewart of this section at that time, gave the land and part of the timber for building. Obediah Lang (whose remains rest in this old church-yard) and he, were intimate friends. They were both staunch Freemasons, and by profession nothing more. Mr. McGregor had often expressed a desire to rest at last in the same burial-ground, and beside his old friend Lang; but his brother gaining control of him in his imbecility, and of his wealth, carried him, notwithstanding his unwillingness and protesting tears, off toward his native Scotland. Whether he ever reached there is not known.

We must admire the religious manner in which your fathers proceeded in their enterprise. They did not wait for the completion of the church to worship God, but frequent meetings were held upon the frame by placing boards around upon it. A Quarterly Meeting was held upon the frame on one occasion, when Bishop Asbury preached, just seven years before he preached his last sermon on earth in 1816.

Brother Joel Potter, who yet survives, with undimmed memory and brightening faith, informs me that Bishop Asbury said: "Brethren, you have a beautiful spot on which to build, and you have a good frame. but"—pausing and looking around awhile, that man of profound forethought said,—"there is one thing you have not, and that is, it is not near large enough."

After the Quarterly Meeting preaching upon the frame, the members retired to the barn of Mr. McGregor (here on John Mount's corner) to hold their love feast, where none could be admitted without the ticket. And as late as the time of Brother Lenhart, I find in the minutes of a Quarterly Conference, "It was resolved that in the opinion of this meeting it is deemed expedient that in future our preacher attend to that part of his duty relative to the distribution of

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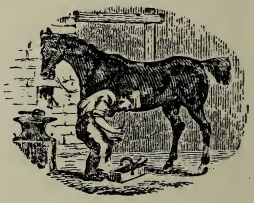

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love-feast tickets, etc., according to Discipline," etc A mild hint to Brother L., with a strong edge to it.

These Quarterly meetings were high days in our earlier Methodism. Early on Quarterly Meeting Sabbath, you would see them coming from Freehold, Middletown Point, Keyport, the Bay Shore and from Squan—coming in open farm wagons, on horse back, and with ox-teams. Carriages were scarce in those days; but what was lacking in carriage-tops the sisters made up in the length of their bonnets—much more sensible than the diminutive daintiness prescribed by the present fashion.

There are those among us to day, who made their "first appearance" as a happy couple, at this church, in open farm wagons and on horse-back. Some are too ready to ascribe all this to their humility of heart; as though they could have had a finer style if they desired it, and as though carriages were as plenty then as now! But it is very easy to be humble when there is no pride in the market. It is strange that some of the very fathers who decry the increasing pride of the day, have so far back-slidden themselves in their old age, as to be among those who drive the handsomest horses and neatest carriages. Now I am not referring to any in this community, but to whom I have known elsewhere, by way of apology for us who are younger. But if the appearance of our fathers was unique, so were the blessings which attended their services They proved to the world that Christ was with them, and they knew His presence, and rejoiced in a conscious salvation from sin.

On the day in which this building was raised, a meeting was held within the frame. Every move, you see, had religion in it. All was done as unto God and for the salvation of men. Brother Solomon Maps, who is almost youthful in his 73rd year of age, distinctly remembers their commencing this service by singing "Jesus My All To Heaven Is Gone." etc.

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The carpenters employed in the erection of this building were Michael Maps, Samuel Lane, Jacob Lane, Montillion Woolly, Hendrick White. Messrs. Maps, Lane and Woolly were working upon a scaffold near the peak of the roof, when down came the scaffolding with a crash to the ground. Mr. Maps rushed down to the store, so much excited that he had not observed the blood marking his footprints. Meeting Mr. McGregor. he exclaimed: "O, Mr. Mc., we are all dead; we are all killed!" Said Mr. Mc., "I guess not quite so bad." "Well, Jake and Till are, anyhow!" It was not so bad. but they were seriously injured.

At length the day of dedication arrived. This was to be an extraordinary day for Long Branch—for this place is the original and proper Long Branch, Services began early. Just as the sun came up from old Atlantic on that cool, beautiful morning, "Billy Smith" preached to the multitude that had already assembled. Sister Hannah Chasey, who was then a young woman of twenty-three, still lingers, though quite feeble, a member of this church.

The people remained after the first morning service, till the second dedicatory sermon, which, upon good authority it is thought, was preached by Samuel Budd, who then lived in the house adjoining the post-office in Long Branch City. This house of God, was dedicated in 1809, but it was not finished until about 1819, some ten years afterwards. The wainscoating was on, as it now is, but there was no lath or plastering upon the walls or ceiling, and the seating was not complete. Tin candlesticks with reflectors were nailed upon the sides of the building. Think of the first sexton, Solomon Gardner, passing around during the sermon, "snuffers" in hand, clipping the candles to keep them bright, and occasionally "clipping" them out!

The first Sunday-school Superintendent of whom I am informed, was Michael Maps, in 1840: then followed the names of George Griggs, W. R. Maps, John Woolly, and so

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on down to later times. It is also worthy of note that the first to "take its chamber in the silent halls of death," the first to rest in this densely-peopled "city of the dead," was a little girl—Sybil Maps, sister to W. R. Maps—whose headstone you will see just North of the church.

At the North-East corner of the church, you find the tomb of Brother Wainwright, who, as a local preacher, often traveled from Tinton Falls to Shark River on foot, with his coat upon his arm, to hold meetings and call men to repentance and faith in Christ. Next to him lies Rev. Mr. Mills, who suddenly passed away one Sabbath morning while the congregation were awaiting his arrival. And among this solemn, silent population, sleep those of all classes and nationalities. There are those who moulder in elegantly ornamented caskets, and those in rude pine box, who went alone to die. You will note the significant cross of the Frenchman; an in the South corner, the large mound of the three hundred Germans from the ill-fated ship NEW ERA; and the shreded flags where recently we heard the Indian mother wail "yeaw, yeaw, yeowa!"

In 1809, Samuel Budd and John Woolson were traveling upon this Freehold circuit—a six-weeks circuit which extended some four hundred miles, Once while Mr. Budd was conducting service in the old church, a man intoxicated slipped through the gallery railing and fell down among the sisters, when the preacher exclaimed: "There is another old sinner converted!"

In 1810, John Woolson and William Smith were appointed to this circuit. Wm. Smith settled in Long Branch in 1830, after a ministry of thirty years. And here on April 8, 1853, "without a struggle, he fell asleep, saying. 'my hope is full of immortality; my way is clear,'" etc.

In 1812, J. C. Totten and colleague were here.

In 1815. David Bartine and others were traveling this circuit. This remarkable self-made man passed to his reward in 1832.

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In 1816, Thomas Neal and Peter Vannest were appointed to Freehold (as it was called). Thomas Neal, "who, whatever impression his ministry made in other respects, never failed to carry the conviction that he was a good man," spent his last years in the city of Burlington, N. J. There, respected and honored by all who knew him, with bright views of the heavenly country, ascended he to its enjoyment in 1859.

In 1819, Daniel Fidler and others were on this circuit, under whose pastorate the original building was first completed. Since 1831 his remains have been resting in the old church-yard at Pemberton, which was then called New Mills.

In 1821–2, Barthol omew Weed and Eliphalet Reed were "in charge." At this time, fifty-two years ago, Sister Mary Cook gave her heart to God, for whom the last service will be held in this church (as it now is) on Tuesday next. During their pastorate the congregation was startled one morning by the cracking of the gallery, which, however, settled but a part of an inch.

In 1823–4, William Lummis and John Walker were on this circuit. It was at this time that the old Rumson Church was built; which is now occupied as the store by Mr. B. F. King. During that year Samuel Throckmorton was recommended by the Quarterly Conference in this Church for license to preach. He was eldest brother to Sydney and Wm. Throckmorton. We understand it was his last fervent appeal which under grace, brought one of those brothers to that Christ in whom he lives to this day. Samuel was regarded as a young man of great promise. Brother Lummis, the senior preacher, died in 1843, saying: "I shall die, and I am ready and willing at any time the Lord shall say the word, and call me to Himself. Of J. Walker, his colleague, it is said he remarked to Brother Shaw, "I would like to give the devil's kingdom one more stroke;" and after a pause

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continued. "but my work is done, and I must die." And with rapture kindling in his eye, said, "I am uot afraid. Tell the preachers at Conferance I am going to heaven; there is no doubt about that." And on April 1, 1849, "his sun set without a cloud."

In 1825, J. Finley and the devoted but rather eccentric Irishman, James Moore, were on this circuit. There are perhaps none, who live to recall the glowing honest face of James Moore, who do not hear him exclaim, as was his frequent manner, "Thot's as thrue as Jemes Moore stonds here" and "isn't thot so brother?" He spoke his last in Medford in 1842, 82 years of age.

In 1826 or 1827, J. L. Gilder and L. M. Prettyman, whose name was expressive of his appearance and style, were appointed to this circuit.

In 1828–9, R. W. Petherbridge and William Granville were on this Freehold circuit. Brother Joel Potter says he preached on one occasion from the text, "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary," etc. He was speaking of coming to Christ while young, and remarked that a man who did not before he arrived at forty years of age, rarely ever came at all. And, says Brother P., "that struck me, for I was about that age, and it was as though he had hit me in the forehead with a beetle; and from that day I tried to seek salvation."

"While father Petherbridge was engaged on one of these large circuits, there came a terrible stormy day. His appointment was distant some ten or twelve miles. His family endeavored to dissuade him from going, on the ground, that no one would be present. But he felt he must be there, if no one else. He went. On reaching the place of meeting he found twelve persons awaiting his arrival. He preached, led class, and gave an opportunity to any who wished to unite with the church. Seven of the number joined on probation, among whom was a man and his wife, four of whose sons subsequently became ministers of the

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Gospel." What an argument is here for laboring faithfully in the smallest fields. Brother Petherbridge offered his last prayer in the home of our present Presiding Elder, Brother Ballard, and now sleeps with the many sainted dead at Pemberton or New Mills.

In 1830–1; John Woolson, J. F. Canfield and I. N. Felch were preachers on this circuit. Brother Felch, a supernumerary in the Newark Conference, resides in Paterson, N. J. It was during the pastorate of Woolson and colleagues that the parsonage was built just West of Lippincott s corner. J. F. Canfield, after forty-four years in the ministry, is now residing in Springfield, Ill.

In 1832–3, David Bartine again, Thomas Stewart, Mulford Day and James Long were traveling this circuit. Of Thomas Stewart, it is said, "he traversed four hundred miles around his circuit. which required three weeks of heavy toil to be followed by a week of rest. But the soul of our evangelist was as large as his field of labor; through the length and breadth of which he traveled with a zeal and ardor that never flagged. At the close of the year upon this circuit with David Bartine, the summing up of the result showed that some seven hundred had been converted. During this year the Asiatic cholera was raging in New York and Philadelphia, so that upon the 4th of July, instead of celebrating our National Independence. it was observed as a day of fasting and prayer. The religious sentiment was greatly aroused in the people. It was in that dark and threatening time that Thomas Stewart came—truly a burning and shining light—preaching upon such texts as "what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world," etc, On September 30, 1833, he preached from the text in Malachi, "For behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven," etc. Multitudes thronged the altars of this old sanctuary,

NOTE.—In the absence of any written record prior to 1830, there may be in the above certain historical inaccuracies or defects.—G. R.

and many yet remain who found "the truth, the life, the way," under his hallowed ministry. His last sermon was from a characteristic text, "The time is short." His fervent soul went home to God from Bordentown, in 1848. Malford Day, a man whose solemn bearing bordered upon gloom, doubtless found the joy eternal in 1851. James Long, that devoted man, noted for his meekness and simplicity, died in Imlaystown, N. J., in 1863.

In 1834, John K. Shaw was preacher in charge at Long Branch. In this year it was first made a seperate station, and the old Freehold circuit ceased to be. Rumson, Eatontown and Tinton Falls were the regular out appointments in connection with this Church. There was preaching occasionally at the old Poplar school-house as early or earlier than this, but when it began I am unable to state. J. K. Shaw spoke of the two years spent upon this charge with great pleasure. In the city of Newark this able and successful preacher met his fate firmly and peacefully.

In 1836–7, John Lenhart was your preacher. Lewis T. Maps was this year recommended by the Quarterly Conference at this Church. He closed his brief but brilliant career (after being appointed to the Toms River circuit, Bergen Missions, reappointed to Toms River, thence to Essex County, Morristown and Patterson, N. J.), on July 11, 1846. Brother Maps, it is said, "possessed a vigorous intellect, a pleasing address, and no inconsiderable share of the fire of genius; while the whole was chastened and adorned by an ardent and consistent piety." He everywhere attracted attention, says a Newark paper, as a gifted and eloquent preacher of the Gospel. His name adds another to the long list which honors the church where he began his ministry.

Perhaps few men have ever been more generally popular in this community than John Lenhart. But I notice in the minutes of a Quarterly Conference "it was resolved to make his salary $400," voting him the privilege of collecting

a deficiency on the previous year's salary, himself. In 1846 he failed as an effective minister. "Poverty and sickness stood before him in all their hideousness," which filled him for a time with great distress of mind. But providence led him into a position in the U. S. Navy, And there at his post, true to the last, he went down on the ship Cumberland in Hampton Roads, in the first year of our civil war.

In 1838–9, J. H. Dandy was preacher in charge. He is now a supernumerary in the Newark Conference, residing at Perth Amboy.

1840–1 were the years of R. E. Morrison, the father-in-law of our honored Editor of the Long Branch News. Mr. Morrison was eminently a man whose fatherly bearing, kindness and love was felt by all associated with him. During his pastorate, the little but exalted pulpit was taken down, the sounding-board removed, and the high backs of the pews lowered. which must of greatly lessened the accommodations for sleeping. It was cruel, but I presume they thought it "expedient," for there were some in the olden time, who would almost sleep at their father's funeral. In the Quarterly Conference minutes for this year, I find recorded the appointment of W. R. Maps, as delegate to attend a meeting in Trenton, to take into consideration the "temporalities of the Presiding Elder"—which is another way of speaking of a District Stewards' Meeting. In this year also Thomas T. Campfield was recommended for license to preach. He now resides at Broadway, N. J. Father Morrison was removed to the fellowship of the Church above in August. 1873, from Hightstown, N. J.

In 1842–3, were the memorable years of James Ayers. During his first year a bent of twelve feet was added to the West end of the Church. It was in this year that the sweet-spirited Israel Corbitt, who rests so early from his labors, was recommended by the Quarterly Conference at this Church. But the chief event of this time was the wonderful

revival of religion with which God favored this Church. So deep and pervading was the interest, that when the "sun was an hour high in the evening," the people crowded to the church in order to obtain a seat. And on a Sabbath morning one hundred and ten were received into the Church on probation. On the Saturday evening previous, during the services in the Church, three distinct prayer meetings were in progress at the same time—one around the altar, one in this gallery, and one in that. In those days the light of salvation dawned upon many a seeking heart that has since entered the light and life above, while many are still serving in the Church below. Brother Ayers in the forty-fifth year of his successful ministry, is now stationed in New Providence, Newark Conference.

Rev. J. S. Swaim followed in 1844–5. His salary was raised, and was estimated thus:

For himself and wife,	$200.00
For three children,	72 00
Table, horse-feed and fuel,	178.00
Total,	$450.00

Brother Swaim is now a supernumerary, residing at Jacksonville, Fla.

Rev. J. N. Crane, who was your pastor in 1846–7, is a supernumerary, residing in Morristown, N. J.

In 1848–9, Rev. Joseph Chattle was appointed to this charge. Under his pastorate S. T. Hudson was licensed to preach. Many have been the young men who first received their commission from this old Church. At one time, also, Alexander Hopper was here licensed, of whom his grandfather used to speak as a "high duke for rude manners" in his early days, but who is now a successful and faithful minister in the Baptist branch of this family. During the ministry of Brother Chattle the Church was visited with the revival spirit, nearly equal to that under Brother Ayers. It was said of him in the Conference Memorial, "He was

favored in many of his fields of labor with gracious revivals and the fragrance of his good name remains in all his circuits. He was a man endowed with clear perception, sound understanding and ready utterance." In May of 1860, this man of purity and power with God ceased forever from the labors of earth.

In 1850-1, Bartholomew Weed was stationed here. At this time the M. E. Church in Eatontown was built and dedicated. Brother Weed is a supernumerary of the Newark Conference, residing in Newark, in the 57th year of his ministry.

During 1852-3, Brother F. A. Morrell endeared himself to all this people by his ability, faithfulness and love.

In 1854-5, Alex Gilmore occupied this pulpit, and he is now acting as Chaplain in the U. S. Army in Arizona Territory.

In 1856-7. your pastor was Thomas Sovereign, who is now residing in Burlington, N. J.

Again, in 1858-9, Brother F. A. Morrell was stationed here; who has at last returned, yet vigorous and active, to make his home in beautiful Long Branch. During his pastorate $773 were raised for liquidating a debt which had remained upon the church and parsonage until this time.

Rev. E. Green followed in 1861, during whose term the Centenary society seperated from this Church, and commenced their worship in the village of Long Branch.

Then in regular succession followed J. Lewis; the ever zealous and esteemed William Franklin; George Neal, S. R. Wheeler and Samuel Parker, all of whom are too well-known and loved to admit of any comment from me.

Here, too, in the years ago, hearts were thrilled by the sonorous voice of the eloquent Jerseyman, Charles Pitman. and others of kindred spirit, whom my space forbids to note.

Sixty-five years of blessing, of strife with sin, of trial and of triumph! Who shall write it? History cannot be

written. A single heart would fill a volume. And what numbers have come and gone from this Bethel never to return! Their records are in the books of God. There were such members as John Lippincott, who three times a day assembled all his work-hands and read to them the word of life; John Martin, the exorter; Michael Howland; Joseph Parker; Francis Martin, the school-teacher; Ellison Covert, the earnest exorter; William Throckmorton; Michael Maps, who said he had subscribed twenty dollars to the church when he had not twenty cents; George Griggs; Jos. Covert, and the colored brother, George E. Moore, who gave fifty dollars towards the erection of this church! Rebecca Martin, Abbie Throckmorton and Hannah Maps, of noted piety. "These all died in the faith." Of Michael Maps and his wife, it is written that they walked together for fifty years, like Zacharia and Elizabeh in all the ordinances of the Lord blameless.

How many have been rejoiced in the Salvation of God, have fought a good fight and are shouting the triumphs above! We are standing to-day on the old battle-ground, not marked with blood, save that of our adorable chieftain, Jesus Christ! This week the Maryland National Guards will visit the old Monmouth battle-field. But we are visiting a holier place, and our memory is singing of grander scenes? We might stand at Bunker Hill with patriotic pride; or we enter the old State House in Philadelphia and are thrilled as we look upon the old cracked bell which rang out the nation's independence; but here in this old temple rang out the deliverence and salvation of immortal souls! When Joshua crossed the last river he carried up stones for a memorial, and when Jacob in his lonely journey had met with Jehovah, he gathered stones together, and rearing a little monument said, "here I'll raise my ebenezer." So will we, by renewing and remodeling this sanctuary, rear a tabernacle to God for it has been good for us to be here, and hitherto the Lord has helped us.

This has been the starting place of many that have gone forth to live and labor for God and the good of man. No wonder that they love it. It is like an old home. And many of you have come back to-day as when one returns to see the old homestead before the buildings are changed, the old trees cut down, the brook filled up, or the fields become strange. You have come home, but the old folks are gone I have met with those, all over the district, who have said it was in the old Church at Long Branch that I was born of God.

Sixty-five years it has stood a beacon light, and warning men of sin. Doubtless, during that time many a soul has foundered and gone down, but they have gone down in view of the light of home.

Now, as in the old church, the aged have come and talked with God, brightening their hopes for heaven, the sorrowful and the poor have been welcomed and consoled, and the youth have learned to love that Jesus—so may it be in all the years to come.

We praise God to-day for this hallowed place. Not that the house in itself is anything, but for what it represents to us. Every place is holy where God meets with his people. There are those who do not prize the influence and blessing of a Church. They will say, let every man take care of himself; but they will not. None can know its preciousness as those who have grown up in it,—to whom it has been as a mother's arms folding and keeping them through all the strife and sin of the world.

Taking leave of this Church (before the old landmarks are removed) is like leaving an old ship which has borne many safely over stormy and dangerous seas; like laying aside an old traveler's staff; or turning away from an old city of refuge in which may be found safety and peace.

Soon you will meet an aged man of snowy locks and feeble frame, who will tell how this old church looked to-day, as our fathers are telling us. And that old man is the little boy who listens to me this morning. Soon we will be sleeping with our fathers in some church-yard; and O, may we through infinite grace, be at home with them in the land that is far away! Amen.

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Supplemental Sermon

By the REV. CURWEN BARTINE FISHER, A.M.
On the Centennial Anniversary of the Laying of the Corner-stone, May 16, 1909.

From the beginning Old First Church has kept good company. 1809, the year of her birth, chronicles the advent of Alfred Tennyson, Oliver Wendell Holmes, William Ewart Gladstone, and the immortal Abraham Lincoln. However, Methodism antedates the organization of Old First by several years. Francis Asbury made a preaching tour through Monmouth County in 1785 and tradition says he preached here at Long Branch at that time. A church building was erected about this time midway between the present villages, West Long Branch and Oakhurst. This early became a part of Freehold circuit which reached from Trenton to the shore. Other denominations seem to have shared this place of worship with the Methodists. About the year 1795, Zenas Conger began his labors as a Methodist preacher in this vicinity. He proved to be a man of irregular habits and complaints were made against him. Many of the congregation sympathized with him. These adherents he gathered about him and organized another church which he styled the Methodist Independents. After the Methodists built the present edifice in 1809 the Independents continued to worship in the old property which was finally deeded to them, their trustees being Stephen Cook, Richard Taber, James Edwards, Ralph Thompson, Thomas Brown, Abram Lane, John Emmons. This society finally became weak and the house unused, and was sold by Stephen Cook in 1846, he being the sole surviving trustee. It was then moved across the road, where the frame may now be found, as originally put together a century and a quarter ago, as a part of Mr. Walter Cornell's barn.

Notwithstanding this departure of the Congerites, Methodism in its purity continued to flourish at the same time. Bishop Asbury's Journal for Monday, Sept. 5, 1791.

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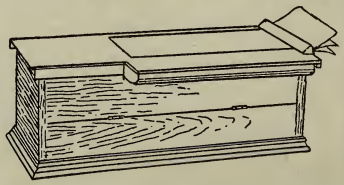

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contains this record: "I rode through much rain to Monmouth (Freehold) where I preached to a considerable congregation on 'The just shall live by faith, etc.' There is some stir among the people at Long Branch, within eighteen months, as I am informed, nearly fifty souls have professed conversion."

Another entry in Mr. Asbury's Journal reads: "Sunday Sept. 30, 1809, at Long Branch my subject was Acts III: 26. It was given me to speak in strong words, words of God and from God. At 3 o'clock I preached in the Episcopal Church at Shrewsbury; I came home with John Throckmorton."

I am led to believe that this sermon by the Bishop was delivered within the sacred walls of the present Old First Church, though as yet not completed. It was in March 1809 that the present Old First was incorporated, with the following named trustees: Elihu Chadwick, Joseph Parker, John Martin, Peter Slocum, John Lippincott and Michael Maps.

The corner-stone was laid May 16, 1809, at 11 o'clock, according to the statement of Mrs. Theodore Woolley, whose mother was born on that day, and related to her this fact. The services lasted from 11 o'clock in the morning until 6 in the evening. The lot for the church was donated by Alexander Mac Gregor. Joseph Totten was the presiding elder and Samuel Budd the preacher in charge. Totten succeeded Budd as preacher in charge of the circuit the next year. The first quarterly meeting was held in the church in 1810, Michael Coates, the presiding elder, preached and Totten followed him with another sermon. Picking berries afforded the girls the means for the gratification of the womanly desire for fine feathers, etc.

Mr. Totten preached a sermon against such ungodliness. The young men came to their defense and resolved to thrash the parson. Totten learned of this, and taking his whip he stepped outside and cracked it challenging them to

Birds Eye View of Old First Methodist Episcopal Church and part of Cemetery

conflict, but his stalwart form and defiant air proved too much for the young gallants. He was not molested.

In 1813, William Mills was the succeeding pastor, a native quaker of Monmouth County, but fired by patriotic feeling became an officer in the Revolutionary Army in 1776, captured by the British, and after thrilling experiences returned; was impressed by the despised Methodists, entered its ministry and closed his career in a most remarkable manner. Sunday morning, December 14th, just as he foresaw and predicted he would before leaving home for the circuit work of the week, yet persisted in entering upon his duties; after first giving his wife sundry directions and advices in case of his death, filled all of his appointments, preaching most fervently, met the early Sunday morning class and returned to Mr. Lippincott's and retired to a room to prepare for the sermon to follow at 10.30. The congregation assembled, but the pastor tarried. Finally on entering the room he was found in a dying condition. Being asked if medical aid should be summoned, he replied, "The Lord is the best physician," and soon the heroic Methodist itinerant was with the church triumphant. At this time the entire Freehold circuit numbered 736 members.

In these early days the parish of the old Church extended from Sea Bright, on the North, to Shark River, on the South. Now twenty-one churches share with her this territory, and she is mother or grand-mother to them all.

Britton Woolley, born in 1812, has a vivid recollection of the appearance in early boyhood of the old Church. The interior remained for some time without plaster. The coming of the circuit rider was a stirring event. The roads were lined with pedestrians walking for miles, men, women and children, carrying their shoes to save the wear, and putting them on before reaching the meeting house. Young children were often carried for miles, for vehicles were scarce in those days. Edward I. Pitcher relates that his

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mother was considered the proudest young woman attending the church because, while walking to church barefoot like the rest, she brought with her a towel and stopped at a nearby house to wash her feet before putting on her shoes.

"William Throckmorton maintained a prophets home," dec'ares the Rev. Thomas O'Hanlon, D. D. Three daughters married methodist preachers: that eloquent and excentric Irishman, Billy Barnes, took one; Samuel Jaquett another, and William Franklin a third. A son, Samuel, entered the ministry. At this home Bishop Asbury and many others whose names are illustrious in the pages of early methodism found sympathy and refreshment. He passed to his reward in a good old age in 1861.

Another such house was that of Michael Maps. For thirty-two years Mr. Maps was the class-leader of that part of the membership which met in the old school house near the present location of Simpson Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, and this class was the origin of that church. As was the class at Fresh Pond (North Long Branch) the origin of Asbury Church. Mrs. Captain Valentine well remembers walking regularly from this point to the old church, and that many others came from much greater distances; mothers in some instances carrying infants and all bringing with them lunches for the day.

Isaac B. White related, as an incident of the times, that his Grandmother White once came a little late to lovefeast, and Francis Martin, the sexton who kept the door, refused her admittance, and she replied to him, "Francis, you have not the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, and I am sure of getting in there."

Mrs. Mary E. Jeffrey Mount, of Red Bank, has in her possession the well-worn family Bible and hymnal used by her father, William Jeffrey, at family worship, and which was handed down to him by his mother, Nancy Jeffrey This ancient copy of God's word will be used in the Centen-

nial Services. His was also a prophets home. Mrs. Mount well remembers the first great stoves into which Sexton John Woolley poked full cordwood sticks as the minister preached, moving around softly two or three times to replenish the supply.

Those churches directly descended from Old First are the following in their order: Shark River, (Hamilton). Rumson, (Little Silver), and from this succeeded First Church, Red Bank, and Grace. Tinton Falls. Eatontown, in 1851. Centenary, (St. Lukes), in 1860. Oceanport. Simpson, 1879. Wayside, 1879. North Long Branch, Sea Bright. And now our baby, Oakhurst, in this our centennial year, as one born out of due time, but fulfilling the Scriptural promise to the righteous, "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing."

In 1874, under the ministry of the Rev. George Reed, the Old Church was rebuilt at a cost of more than four thousand dollars. The side galleries were removed, the windows enlarged and thirteen feet added in front.

In 1886, during the pastorate of the Rev. B. C. Lippincott, D. D., the Sunday-school Chapel was built.

In 1895, under the ministry of the Rev. Pennington Corson, the beautiful modern pews were added and the ceiling was put on.

In 1902, during the ministry of the Rev. William Mitchell, the Old Church was further improved by the addition of the fine memorial windows, and a little later, under the pastorate of the Rev. James Moore, D. D., the building was thoroughly repaired, painted and carpeted at a cost of about one thousand dollars. This was made possible largely through the labors and generosity of Mrs. J. H. Parker, a summer resident, from New York City.

In 1905, the old dilapidated parsonage was rebuilt and enlarged, under the pastorate of the Rev. Eli Gifford, at a cost of about four thousand dollars, and additions were also made to the Sunday-school Chapel.

The beautiful copies of the new church hymnal, ample to supply every worshipper, were the gift of Mrs. Richard Deeves, another New York friend. The kindness of many other such friends might also be mentioned to show the veneration of all for the dear Old First.

The pastors serving the charge subsequent to those mentioned in the historical sermon follow in their order: George Reed, W. E. Boyle, Walter Chamberlaine, R. J. Andrews, W. S. Barnart, B. C. Lippincott, Willis Reeves, George S. Sykes, J R. Daniels, Pennington Corson. C. F. Downs, L. O. Manchester, J. W. Morris, William Mitchell, James Moore, Eli Gifford, C. B. Fisher.

The excellent memory of Brother Edwin S. Woolley has helped the writer to bridge over many gaps.

The Recording Stewards of the earlier period in order seem to have been Michael Maps, William R. Maps, Isaiah S. Lane, C. V. Golden, Thomas Cook, and to them we are indebted for the most we know. William R. Slocum, our present recording steward, is a worthy successor, having filled that office for twelve successive years.

The early minutes of the official meetings contain some interesting entries. In 1837 a resolution was passed enjoining "the preacher to attend to that part of his duty relative to the distribution of the lovefeast tickets."

In 1842 appears a resolution recommending that Rumson and Tinton Falls be seperated from this charge, provided a single man can be obtained as preacher for the new circuit.

At this time camp meetings were annually held near Red Bank and were unitedly supported by all the churches of the circuit. An entry states that the camp meeting was ordered to take the place of the quarterly meetings, which implies that quarterly meetings meant something in those days. The recommendation of several men for reception into the traveling ministry appears; among them being

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Certain brethern are reported as delinquent as to class dues, and a resolution appears providing "that their cases be attended to according to the Discipline."

A committee is constituted to "estimate the table and other necessary expenses of the preacher during the present conference year." "Resolved. that the hay and fuel of the preacher in charge be included in the estimation of expenses and that thereby the salary be increased from $400. to $500. for this year." At this time Rumson's share is $125. and Tinton Falls pays $75. Old First $300. Estimating committee reports: "Disciplinary allowance for Brother ——— and wife $200; three children $72; table expenses, horse and fuel, $178;" all of which is strange reading to this generation.

In view of the present effort to build a suitable church at the seat of Princeton University, the following entry is significant: "Presiding Elder Isaac Wirmer called attention to the project contemplating the purchase of a lot of ground in the village of Princeton for a site upon which to erect a M. E. Church. The plan was that the price, $500.00, should be paid by the official members of the district as their part towards the church. Resolved, that the officials of Long Branch raise $40.00 as their portion of the same." Whereupon $46.50 was subscribed by the brethren present. This was in 1846.

In 1851. "It is the sense of this meeting that the time has arrived when it is expedient to make an effort to build a M. E. Church in the village of Eatontown."

After the above noted separation from the charge of Rumson and Tinton Falls the preaching plan of the charge as arranged by the pastor, the Rev. Joseph Chattle, in 1850 was as follows: Preaching at Old First every Sabbath both morning and evening, and preaching on Sabbath afternoon

Cedar Avenue Looking East, and Home of Alexander McGregor in 1800 at the Right.

Cedar Avenue Looking West.

in rotation at Long Branch School House, Wolf Hill School House, Sea District School House, and Poplar (J Howlands), which gave these points a service once in four weeks. But local preachers were on hand and filled in the gaps,

Through the kindness of Mrs. Mary Van Brunt of Long Branch, there was placed in the writers hands the Biography of the Rev. Thomas E. Stewart, who was associated with David Bartine and others on the old Freehold circuit in 1832 and 1833. Among the many interesting facts there recorded, we learn that the circuit then comprised eight principle appointments, besides the number of minor ones where the preachers held forth in school houses and private homes, requiring four hundred miles travel and three weeks time to make the rounds. These were: Long Branch, (the most influential), Bethany, Rumson, Middletown, High Point, Keyport, Squankum, Shark River, Freehold, Tinton Falls, Colts Neck, Trap, Red Bank and others. At Red Bank but two Methodist families were found, but by the assistance of brethren from Rumson and Tinton Falls, an excellent congregation was soon obtained. Mr. Stewart was the first Methodist preacher who ever preached in Red Bank.

Writing to a friend he says: "There is room for work in the neighborhood of Long Branch and there is much hope. The people flock to the prayer meetings, held in private houses, so that we are compelled to conceal them from the public, lest they come in multitudes that could not be accommodated."

In his diary for June 5, 1833 he writes: "Preached this evening at Brother Fountain's, seven miles from Middletown Point. Here I saw a very singular phenomenon, or else it was an optical delusion, a streak of fire came through the ceiling, and passed down through the floor of the apartment in which we were assembled! The effect I am positive was not a delusion—the people fell all over the floor! I closed the Bible and surrendered to the workings of the

Spirit! The Lord was preaching in his own way! Saints were powerfully blest, sinners were converted and the little society in this neighborhood was built up."

June 7, 1833, "Preached at Mount Pleasant. Three good sisters walked twelve miles; four others eight miles! I remarked—'You came a long distance, sisters. Bless God, said they, we have meeting all the way home.'"

During the two years of the ministry of Mr. Stewart and his associates more than one thousand professed conversion. Their work extended from beyond Keyport to within a few miles of Toms River in the pines.

August 6, 1833, he writes: "Hundreds are seeking salvation on this circuit. I preached last Tuesday at a place where the congregation has increased in fifteen months from twenty to five hundred."

During his pastorate Mr. Stewart resided in the old parsonage here (Long Branch) and remained at home every fourth week for rest and study. He speaks of the delightful home and the great kindness of the people to his family. Speaking of the pain experienced by his wife through these long periods of separation, he says: "She had kind and attentive neighbors in the families of William Throckmorton, Philip Dennis, Michael Maps and John Hopper."

In 1836 the official body was constituted as follows: I. L. Lenhart, preacher in charge; William Throckmorton. Joseph Parker, Obadiah Sairs, John Hopper, John Cook, Michael Parker, William R. Maps, Joseph Covert, Michael Maps, James Joline, John Martin, William I. Sanford, John Woolley, Joseph Campbell, William Covert, Benjamin King, James Martin, Gordon Wardell, Peter Slocum, Edward Bown, Henry Brinley, Joseph Goodenough, Ellison Covert, Thomas I. Lyon, William Crum.

The blood of the heroic saints of these early days flows in the veins of many descendents in this community, and the fact that the old names are perpetuated so largely in

the records of the church speaks well for the home religion and influence of those days.

May the glory of the Old Church never fade and her influence never wane.

By Centennial Committee:

A. R. Chinery,
William M. Golden,
Richard R. Hughes,
C. B. Fisher, Pastor.

West Long Branch, N. J.
May 15, 1909

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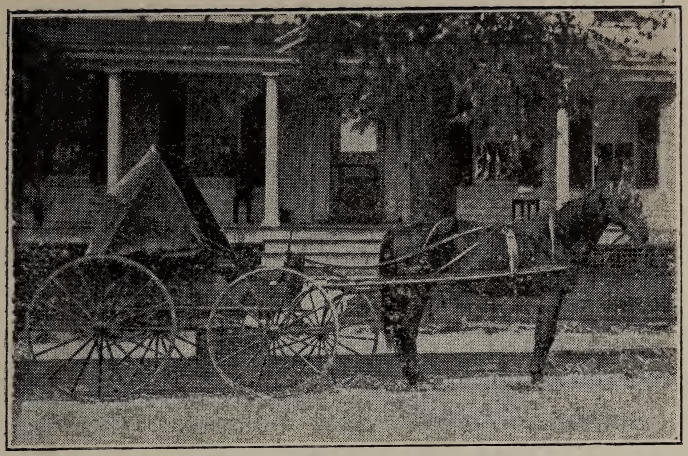

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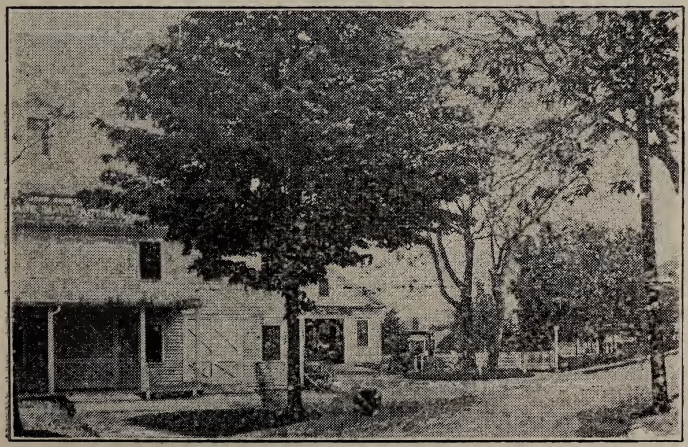

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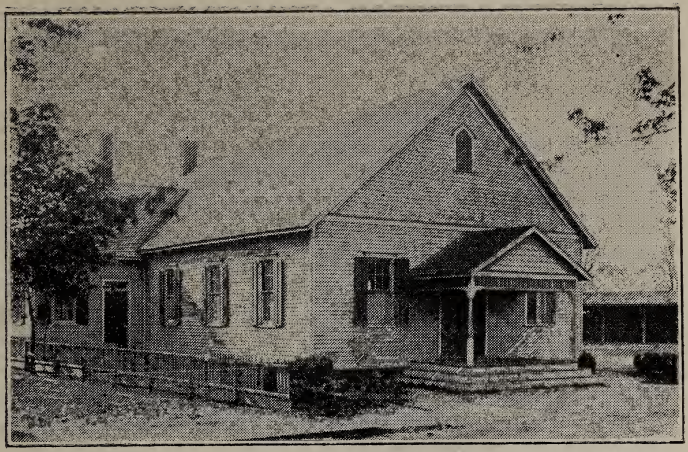

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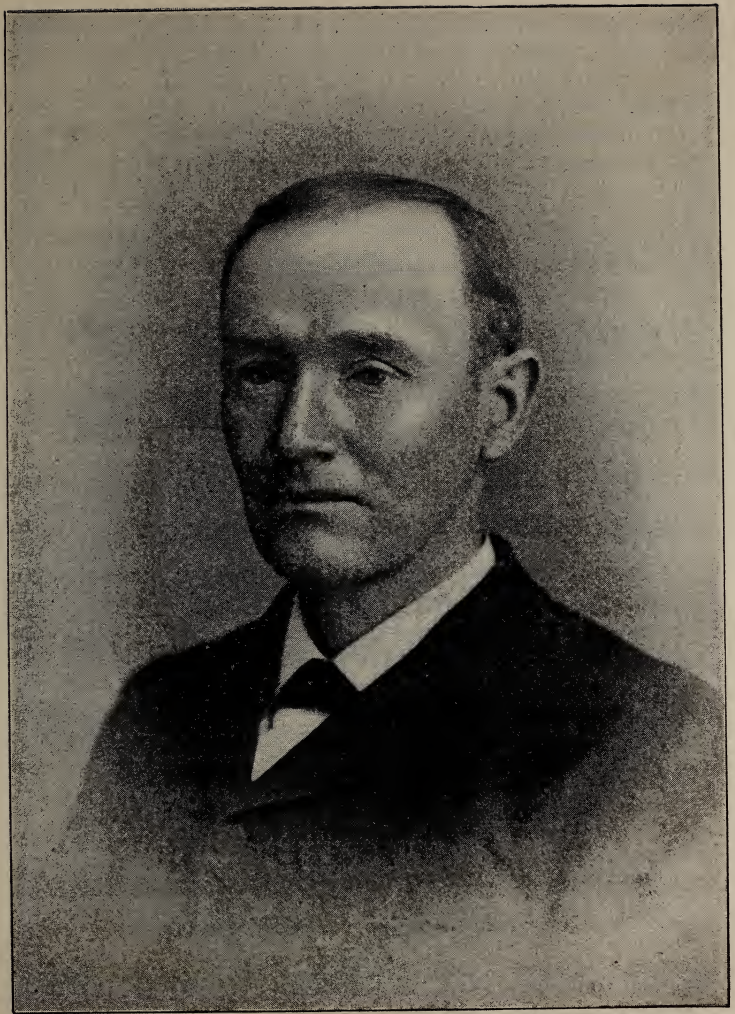

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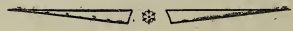

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It affords us great pleasure to be able to hand down as history the most remarkably successful Bazaar ever held by the Church under the leadership of the efficient chairman, Mrs. Mary Cornell. The ladies threw their souls into the work from the beginning; no pains were spared, no sacrifice seemed too great. The splendid total of one thousand dollars, net earnings, is the fitting reward. The editorial tribute which we take from the Red Bank Register is highest commendation:

A Harmonious Church.

"The Methodist Church in the little hamlet of West Long Branch recently celebrated its Centennial with a fair. That fair was probably the most successful church fair ever held in Monmouth County in a place as small as West Long Branch. Everybody in the village took a hand in helping the fair along and there was a unanimity of sentiment that was as delightful as it was rare. The result was that over a thousand dollars was cleared by the fair. This church was founded in 1809. It is therefore about the oldest Methodist Church in Monmouth County. Its members pull together. If they all can't have just what they want they unite on the things that most of them want and they go in with a will to bring about the desired improvement. There are few churches in the county which are so harmonious as this old Methodist Church of "Hoppertown." It sets an example which could well be followed by a lot of churches in other places, where the members are constantly at war with each other, and where the good which a church might do is more than neutralized by unseemly scraps over ministers, and church finances, and other church matters."—Red Bank Register.

REPORT IN DETAIL.

Mrs. Richard Deeves, of New York City, a summer visitor, came to our assistance, presenting us with a barrel of gold amounting to $158.00. A part of which she had gleaned from friends.

Mrs. Joseph White entered into the work with her usual enthusiasm and turned over $102.00 in cash from her friends.

Mrs. Charles Clayton also successfully appealed to many raising by her energetic effort a total of $51.50.

Others collected a total of $113.33.

Mr. Edgar Woolley honored the church of his boyhood with a gift of $100.00, making the aggregate of cash donations $524.83.

On the two eventful days of the bazaar our wares were offered to the public through eight beautifully arranged booths and the results were as follows:

Home-made bread and cakes,	$ 28.57
Fancy needlework, ...	257.49
Aprons,.....	83 25
Candy,.....	25.79
Novelties,.....	48 82
Lemonade,.....	7.95
Cabbage Patch,.....	45.40
Ice Cream,.....	96.45
Total.	$593.72
Grand Total,... .... $1118,55	
Expenditures,... ... 118.55	
Net Proceeds.....	$1,000.00

It is hoped that an additional thousand dollars will be raised before the close of the Centennial celebration which will cancel all indebtedness upon church and parsonage.

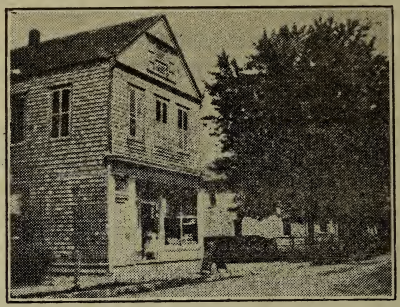
ERRATA.

In the order of exercises for Sunday, August 15th, on page 1 or 9, substitute the name Bishop Thomas B. Neeley, L.L.D., New Orleans, for Rev. Johu Krautz, D.D.; and add Rev. J. W. Morris, D.D., to list of former pastors.

Page 47. Add James Atcheson to Centennial Committee.

Page 56. Add the name Mary White, Locust Avenue.

Business Property FOR SALE



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